This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of awarding loyalty points to patrons of a gaming establishment on a gaming apparatus, the computer-implemented method comprising:

receiving a first loyalty program instrument designed or configured to store an amount of loyalty points earned from a first activity not associated with the gaming apparatus;

validating the first loyalty program instrument;

receiving activity data associated with an activity by the patron of said gaming establishment;

determining based on the activity data that the patron has begun an activity for which loyalty points are to be accrued;

accruing the loyalty points for the patron during the activity;

awarding to the patron some or all of the loyalty points accrued during the activity;

combining the awarded loyalty points and the amount of loyalty points earned from the first activity; and

issuing to the patron a loyalty program instrument, said loyalty program instrument different from said first loyalty program instrument, designed or configured to store the combined loyalty points.

16. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the gaming establishment is a casino.

17. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the gaming establishment is a gaming entity comprising a plurality of venues.

18. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein said activity is playing a gaming machine of the gaming establishment.

19. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein said activity is playing a game of chance within the gaming establishment.

20. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein said activity is a food purchase, an entertainment purchase, a transportation purchase, a lodging purchase, a merchandise purchase and a service purchase.

21. (Original) The computer-implemented method of claim 20, wherein said activity occurs in a venue within the gaming establishment.

22. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 20, wherein said activity occurs in a venue affiliated with the gaming establishment.

23. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 22, wherein the venue affiliated with the gaming establishment is in communication with the gaming establishment via the Internet.

24. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the loyalty points stored on the loyalty program instrument are redeemable for at least one of comps, goods and services provided by the gaming establishment.

25. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein a rate at which the patron accrues loyalty points varies according to one or more of a time of day, days of a week, months of a year, an amount wagered, a game denomination, a promotional event, a game type and a rate of wagering.

26. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the accruing of loyalty points begins without receiving a player tracking card from the patron.

27. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the accruing of loyalty points begins without receiving player tracking information from the patron.

28. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the patron has a player tracking account with the gaming establishment.

29. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the patron has a player tracking account with the gaming establishment, and wherein the accrued loyalty points are awarded to said patron anonymously, without crediting the patron's player tracking account.

30. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, further comprising:
    converting some or all of the accrued loyalty points to at least one of goods and services without crediting any of the loyalty points to a player tracking account.

31. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, further comprising:
    crediting the loyalty points stored on the loyalty point instrument to a player tracking account of the patron.

32. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 31, wherein the loyalty points are credited to the patron's player tracking account using at least one of a phone, a gaming machine, a clerk validation terminal, a cashier station, a casino kiosk, a hand-held wireless device, video display interface in a hotel room and via mail.

33. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the loyalty program instrument is at least one of a printed ticket, a magnetic striped card, a room key, a portable wireless device and a smart card.

34.(Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, wherein the loyalty program instrument is designed or configured to store one or more of prize information, loyalty point information, an establishment, a location, a bar code, a

instrument type, an issue date, a validation number, an issue time, an instrument number, an instrument sequence number and a machine number.

35. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 15, further comprising:

redeeming the loyalty points stored on the loyalty point instrument for comps, goods and services using at least one of a phone, a gaming machine, a clerk validation terminal, a cashier station, a casino kiosk, a hand-held wireless device, a web interface and a video display interface located in a hotel room, and via mail.

36. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of awarding loyalty points to a game player on a gaming machine, the computer-implemented method comprising:

receiving a first loyalty program instrument designed or configured to store an amount of loyalty points earned from a first activity not associated with the gaming machine;

validating the first loyalty program instrument;

receiving first gaming event data associated with a first gaming activity on the gaming machine;

detecting, based on the first gaming event data, a first gaming event initiated by the game player at the gaming machine;

in response to the first gaming event, accruing loyalty points;

receiving second gaming event data associated with a second gaming activity on the gaming machine;

detecting, based on said second gaming event data, a second gaming event at the gaming machine;

determining an amount of loyalty points accrued between the first gaming event and the second gaming event;

awarding to the game player some or all of the accrued loyalty points;

combining the awarded loyalty points and the amount of loyalty points earned from the first activity; and

issuing to the game player a loyalty program instrument, said loyalty program instrument different from said first loyalty program instrument, designed or configured to store the combined loyalty points.

37. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, wherein the loyalty program instrument is designed or configured to store one or more of prize information, loyalty point information, an establishment, a location, a bar code, a instrument type, an issue date, a validation number, an issue time, an instrument number, an instrument sequence number and a machine number.

38. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, wherein the loyalty program instrument is at least one of a printed ticket, a magnetic striped card, a room key, a portable wireless device and a smart card.

39. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, wherein the first gaming event is one or more of depositing an indicia of credit into the gaming machine, inserting a card into a card reader located on the gaming machine, activating an input button on the gaming machine, inputting a loyalty program instrument into a gaming device on the gaming machine or entering a code into the gaming machine.

40. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, further comprising:
        storing information to the loyalty program instrument.

41. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, wherein the second gaming event is detecting zero credits registered on the gaming machine, the gaming machine remaining idle for an amount of time, detecting a tilt condition or detecting an error condition, detecting a game player's request for a loyalty program instrument.

42. (Cancelled).

43. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim, 36 wherein the loyalty point instrument is input into the gaming machine using at least one of a card reader, a wireless interface, a bill validator and a ticket reader.

44. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, further comprising:

displaying the awarded amount of loyalty points to the game player.

45. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, further comprising:

storing loyalty program transaction information on a memory device located on the gaming machine.

46. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, further comprising:

sending loyalty program transaction information to a gaming device located outside of the gaming machine.

47. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, further comprising:

displaying a prize menu wherein the prize menu includes one or more prizes redeemable for an amount of loyalty points;

receiving a prize selection selected from the one or more prizes displayed on the prize menu; and

when the amount of loyalty points required to redeem the prize is less than an amount of loyalty points available on the gaming machine,

issuing a loyalty program instrument wherein said loyalty program instrument is used to redeem the selected prize.

48. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, further comprising:

presenting a game play sequence between the first gaming event and the second gaming event wherein said game play sequence includes game play of one or more games.

49. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 48, wherein the one or more games is selected from the group consisting of video slot games, mechanical slot games, video black jack games, video poker games, video keno games, video pachinko games, video card games, video games of chance and combinations thereof.

50. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, wherein a rate at which the player accrues loyalty points varies according to one or more of a time of day, days of a week, months of a year, an amount wagered, a game denomination, a promotional event, a game type and a rate of wagering.

51. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, wherein the loyalty points are accrued without receiving a player tracking card from the game player.

52. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, wherein the loyalty points are accrued without receiving player tracking information from the game player.

53. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, further comprising:
    performing a loyal program instrument transaction.

54. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, further comprising
    presenting on the gaming machine at least one of a particular game, a particular bonus game, a game feature and a bonus game feature in exchange for an amount of loyalty points redeemed on the gaming machine.

55. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, wherein said accrued loyalty points are determined by a logic device located on the gaming machine.

56. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 36, wherein a first gaming machine is designed or configured to communicate loyalty point information to a second gaming machine.

57. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 56, further comprising:

simultaneously accruing loyalty points on the first gaming machine and the second gaming machine;

communicating an amount of loyalty points awarded on the second gaming machine to the first gaming machine;

combining an amount of loyalty points awarded on the second gaming machine with an amount of loyalty points awarded on the first gaming machine; and

issuing a loyalty program instrument designed or configured to store the combined awarded loyalty points.

58-103. (Cancelled)

104. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 56, further comprising: wherein the player tracking points are accrued without initiating a player tracking session.

105. (Currently Amended A gaming apparatus comprising of one or more processors adapted and/or configured for:

receiving a first loyalty program instrument designed or configured to store an amount of loyalty points earned from a first activity not associated with the gaming apparatus;

validating the first loyalty program instrument;

receiving activity data associated with an activity by the patron of said gaming establishment;

determining based on the activity data that the patron has begun an activity for which loyalty points are accrued;

accruing the loyalty points for the patron during the activity;

awarding to the patron some or all of the loyalty points accrued during said activity;

combining the awarded loyalty points and the amount of loyalty points earned from the first activity; and

issuing to the patron a loyalty program instrument ,said loyalty program instrument different from said first loyalty program instrument, designed or configured to store the combined loyalty point.

106. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising of one or more processors adapted and/or configured for:

receiving a first loyalty program instrument designed or configured to store an amount of loyalty points earned from a first activity not associated with the gaming apparatus;

validating the first loyalty program instrument;

receiving first gaming event data associated with a first gaming activity on the gaming machine;

detecting, based on the first gaming event data, a first gaming event initiated by the game player at the gaming machine;

in response to the first gaming event, accruing loyalty points;

receiving second gaming event data associated with a second gaming activity on the gaming machine;

detecting, based on the second gaming event data, a second gaming event at the gaming machine;

determining an amount of loyalty points accrued between the first gaming event and the second gaming event;

awarding to the game player some or all of the accrued loyalty points; and

combining the awarded loyalty points and the amount of loyalty points earned from the first activity; and

issuing to the game player a loyalty program instrument, said loyalty program instrument different from said first loyalty program instrument, designed or configured to store the combined loyalty points.